

Appl. No. 09/935,082
Reply dated Nov. 28, 2005
In Response to Office Action of Jul. 27, 2005

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over United States Patent Publication No. 2002/0031196 A1 ("Muller") in view of United States Patent Publication No. 2002/0114303 A1 ("Crosbie"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection as set forth below.

To maintain the obviousness rejection, each and every element as set forth in the claims must be taught by Muller in view of Crosbie. Applicant respectfully submits that Muller in view of Crosbie does not teach each and every element as set forth in the claims.

Claim 1 recites, for example, "distributing a global clock to a first master device from the plurality of master devices wherein said first master device operates according to a local clock that is independent of said global clock" and "distributing said offset to at least one master device other than said first master device".

The Office Action states, in the form of an admission, that Muller does not teach at least the above-recited elements as set forth in claim 1. Office Action at page 2. However, the Office Action further alleges that Crosbie make up for the teaching deficiencies of Muller. Applicant respectfully submits that Crosbie does not make up for the teaching deficiencies of Muller.

Applicant respectfully draws the attention of the Examiner to the fact that one clause recites "distributing a global clock" and that another clause recites "distributing said offset to at least one master device other than said first master device" as set forth in claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 differentiates between distributing a clock and distributing an offset. Applicant respectfully submits that Crosbie does not teach at least the following elements: "distributing said offset to at least one master device other than said first master device".

Crosbie at FIG. 6 shows a gold access point 24-4 sending a timing signal 42-3 to a silver access point 24-5 that has a silver slave timing module 40-1 and a silver master timing module 38-2. The timing signal 42-3 is not the "offset" as set forth in claim 1. As corresponding FIG. 5 shows, "[t]he timing pattern 44-4 shows a *timing signal* for a gold clock 63-1 produced by a gold oscillator 64-1 (see FIG. 6) which is contained in or associated with a gold access point 24-4". Crosbie at page 6, paragraph [0062] (*italics added*). As FIG. 5 shows, timing pattern 44-4, which is timing signal 42-3 is not an offset, but a clock signal.

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Further evidence that silver access point 24-5 does not receive an "offset" from the golf access point 24-4 can be found in Crosbie. "In FIG. 6, the silver access point 24-5 on the slave side timing module 40-1 measures the phase difference or clock offset 62-1 (see FIG. 5) between the unadjusted silver clock 66-1 and the gold clock 63-1 as determined by a timing signal 42-3 received from the golf access point 24-4". Crosbie at page 7, paragraph [0070]. Thus, as shown in FIGS. 5 and 6, the silver access point 24-5 receives the gold clock signal of the gold access point 24-4 in the form of the timing signal 42-3 (see timing pattern 44-4 in FIG. 5) and compares it with its own unadjusted silver clock 66-1. From the comparison, the silver access point 24-5 determines an offset. See "silver offset 62-1" in FIG. 5 of Crosbie. Thus, no offset is being distributed as set forth in claim 1.

After the silver offset 62-1 is determined in the silver access point 24-5 by comparing the received gold clock 63-1 and unadjusted silver clock 66-1, the silver offset 62-1 is shared internally between the silver slave timing module 40-1 and the silver master timing module 38-2 of the *same* access point (i.e., the silver access point 24-5 as shown in FIG. 7 of Crosbie) via timing registers 92-1, 92-2 of the *same* access point.

In view of at least the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that Crosbie does not teach "distributing said offset to at least one master device other than said first master device". Instead, Crosbie describes sending clock signals (not offsets) as timing signals between access points of different hierarchy. Furthermore, Crosbie describes sharing timing information between a slave timing module and a master timing module of the same access point.

Since Crosbie does not make up for the admitted teaching deficiencies of Muller, the obviousness rejection cannot be maintained. It is therefore respectfully requested that the obviousness rejection be withdrawn with respect to claim 1 and its rejected dependent claims (i.e., claims 2-9).

Claim 10 recites, for example, "distributing a global clock to a first master device from the plurality of master devices" and "distributing said offset to a second master device selected from the plurality of master devices". Accordingly, the same or similar arguments, if appropriate, that were made with respect to claim 1 are made with respect to claim 10. It is therefore respectfully requested that the obviousness rejection be withdrawn with respect to claim 10 and its rejected dependent claims (i.e., claims 11-14).

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Claim 15 recites, for example, "means for determining an offset between said global clock and said local clock, wherein said offset is distributed to at least one of said master devices". Accordingly, the same or similar arguments, if appropriate, that were made with respect to claim 1 are made with respect to claim 15. It is therefore respectfully requested that the obviousness rejection be withdrawn with respect to claim 15 and its rejected dependent claims (i.e., claims 16-22).

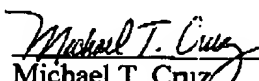
Claim 23 recites, for example, "means for generating a local clock using an offset and said global clock, wherein said offset is available to other of said master devices via said communication pathway". Accordingly, the same or similar arguments, if appropriate, that were made with respect to claim 1 are made with respect to claim 23. It is therefore respectfully requested that the obviousness rejection be withdrawn with respect to claim 23 and its rejected dependent claims (i.e., claims 24-30).

In view of at least the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims 1-30 are in condition for allowance. Should anything remain in order to place the present application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge additional fees or credit overpayments to the deposit account of McAndrews, Held & Malloy, Account No. 13-0017.

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Respectfully submitted,


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